



Shrimping The Sound Newsletter

Spring 2012

A PUBLICATION OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES, SHRIMP AND CRAB BUREAU

State of Mississippi
Phil Bryant, Governor

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources

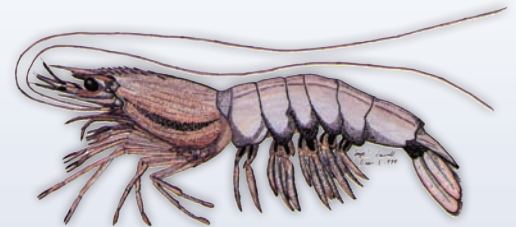
Dr. Vernon Asper, Ph.D., Chairman, *Non Profit Environmental Organization*

Jimmy Taylor, Vice Chairman, *Charter Boat Operator*

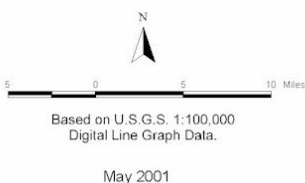
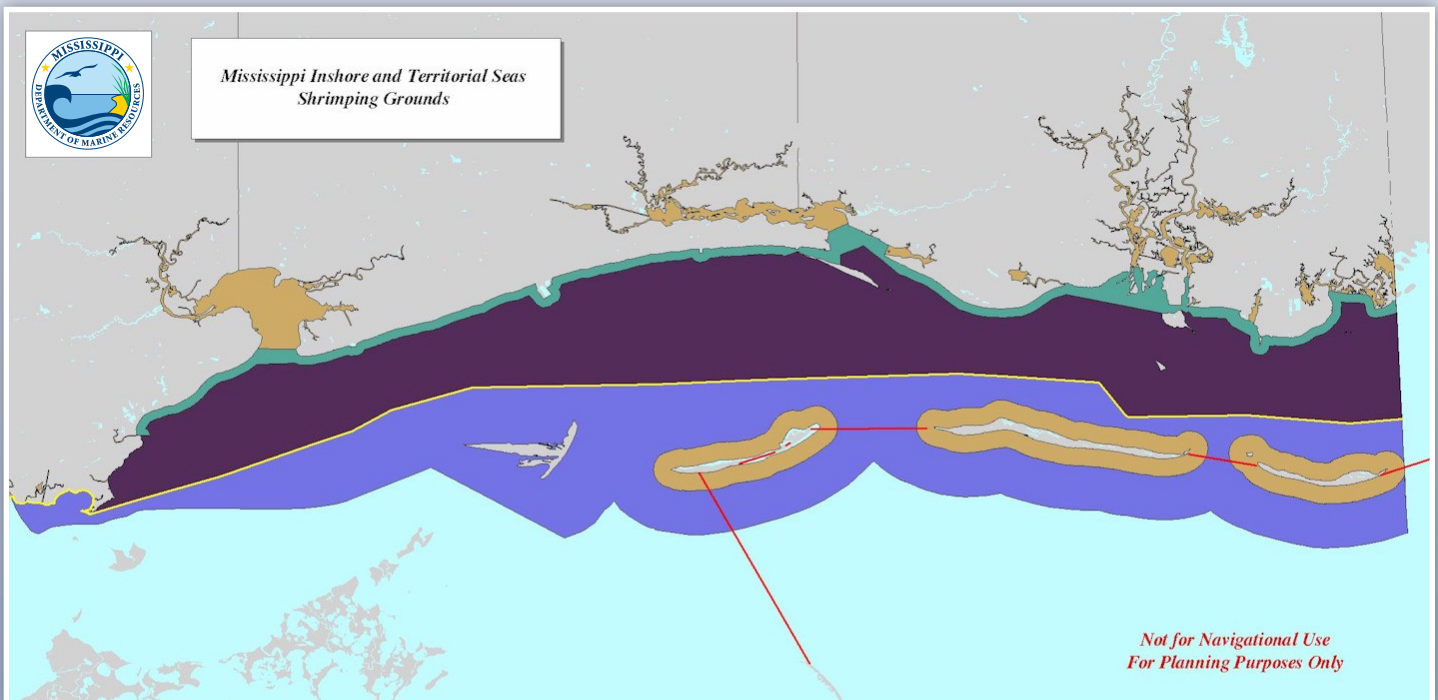
Shelby Drummond, *Recreational Fisherman*

Richard Gollott, *Commercial Seafood Processor*

Steve Bosarge, *Commercial Fisherman*

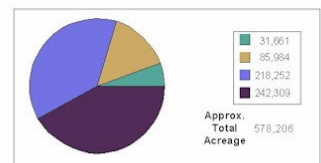


(228) 374-5000
www.dmr.ms.gov



- Closed to all shrimping, inland and within 1 mile of Gulf Islands National Seashore shoreline
- Open to live bait shrimping only, within 1/2 mile of the shoreline
- Open to commercial & recreational shrimping on a seasonal basis until December 31
- Open to commercial and recreational shrimping on a seasonal basis until April 30
- Exclusive Economic Zone and/or other state waters


















- Intracoastal Waterway
- Colregs Demarcation Line



DMR Prepares Fishermen for Trip Ticket Program

The Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources (MCMR) has updated Regulation Title 22 Part 9, which introduced a trip ticket program and became effective January 1, 2012. The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) is working with fishermen and seafood dealers to implement this change which requires trip tickets on seafood landed in Mississippi. Emergency funding is sometimes based on landings; therefore it is important to collect all sources of landings in Mississippi. Trip tickets also provide data to manage fisheries, provide for quantification of loss of income due to hurricanes and other disasters and allow a more equitable distribution of disaster funds. Please visit the MDMR and obtain a trip ticket manual, monthly submission forms and trip tickets if you fall into one of the four categories below and are currently working in the seafood industry as a dealer or commercial fisherman. Further information on the trip ticket program is available on the MDMR website at www.dmr.ms.gov. The trip ticket manual and monthly submission forms are also available for downloading on the website under Commercial Fisheries/ Trip Ticket Program.

- 1) Each seafood dealer/processor is hereby required to complete Mississippi trip tickets and monthly submission forms provided by the MDMR, unless otherwise specified (see MDMR Regulation Title 22, Part 9).
- 2) Mississippi resident commercial fishermen who land their catch in Mississippi and sell their catch to **anyone other than a licensed Mississippi dealer/processor** are required to complete Mississippi trip tickets and monthly submission forms provided by the MDMR and be in possession of a fresh product permit (**available at MDMR at no cost**). This includes fishermen who sell to out-of-state dealers/processors by vehicle. Sales from vessels are excluded.
- 3) Non-resident commercial fishermen who land their catch in Mississippi and sell their catch to **anyone in Mississippi other than a Mississippi licensed dealer/processor** must possess a fresh product permit and are required to complete Mississippi trip tickets and monthly submission forms provided by the MDMR.
- 4) Non-resident commercial fishermen who land their catch in Mississippi and **transport their catch out-of-state** are required to purchase and possess a Dealer/Processor License and are required to complete Mississippi trip tickets and monthly submission forms provided by the MDMR.

Type of Seafood License	BUSINESS ACTIVITIES								
	Harvesting	Selling seafood to the public fresh off the boat		Selling seafood to a retail store		Selling seafood roadside peddling		Selling seafood to a Mississippi dealer/processor wholesale	
		Harvester (sell your own catch)	Seafood Dealer (buy/resell)	Harvester (sell your own catch)	Seafood Dealer (buy/resell)	Harvester (sell your own catch)	Seafood Dealer (buy/resell)	Harvester (sell your own catch)	Seafood Dealer (buy/resell)
Commercial Fishing License									
Seafood Dealer's License									
Fresh Product Permit									
Food Permit from Health Dept. 601-576-7689					 *				 *
 = Needed									
* = Needed only if product is cooked									

A monthly submission form must be filled out and sent to the MDMR on or before the tenth of the month for the preceding month. The monthly submission form should be sent in along with that month's trip tickets. If you are a seafood dealer and do not buy, acquire or handle wild caught seafood from commercial fishermen during a given month, you still must send in a monthly submission form indicating "0" trips for that month. If you are a fresh product permittee and do not handle seafood for sales to the consumer for a given month, you still must send a monthly submission form indicating "0" trips for that month. Further information on the monthly submission form is available in the trip ticket manual.

First Regional Study of the Economic Performance of the Inshore Gulf Shrimp Fishery Completed

The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC) has completed its first study to better understand the economic performance of commercial shrimpers who harvest shrimp in state waters in the Gulf of Mexico. The study examined the commercial shrimping activities, revenues and expenditures in order to calculate a variety of economic and financial indicators for this segment of the Gulf commercial shrimp harvesting fishery.

The study used a voluntary mail survey in order to target resident licensed commercial shrimpers who harvested shrimp primarily from state waters in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and western Florida in 2008. The survey was conducted by the GSMFC and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries with the support and cooperation of NOAA Fisheries. The survey, which received 591 responses for a raw response rate of 33.7%, gathered economic data related to revenues, harvesting expenditures, and fixed costs of the inshore shrimp fleet. Statistical methods were used to clean the data. The study results are subsequently based on the responses of 313 commercial shrimpers.

Gulf state waters shrimpers reported an average of approximately \$43,000 in seafood related revenues, including approximately \$36,000 in revenues from shrimp and \$7,000 from other types of seafood. Average cash inflow (the combination of seafood revenues and government payments) was approximately \$46,000.

Cash outflow (the sum of expenses related to commercial shrimping activities) averaged approximately \$40,000. Fuel expenditures accounted for approximately 30% of total annual cash outflows, while expenses for other trip-related items, such as oil, salt, ice, and groceries accounted for about 11%. Approximately 24% of total annual cash outflows were related to repair costs, approximately 14% were paid to crew costs, and approximately 4% went to a combination of insurance premiums and loan payments. Overhead expenditures represented approximately 17%.

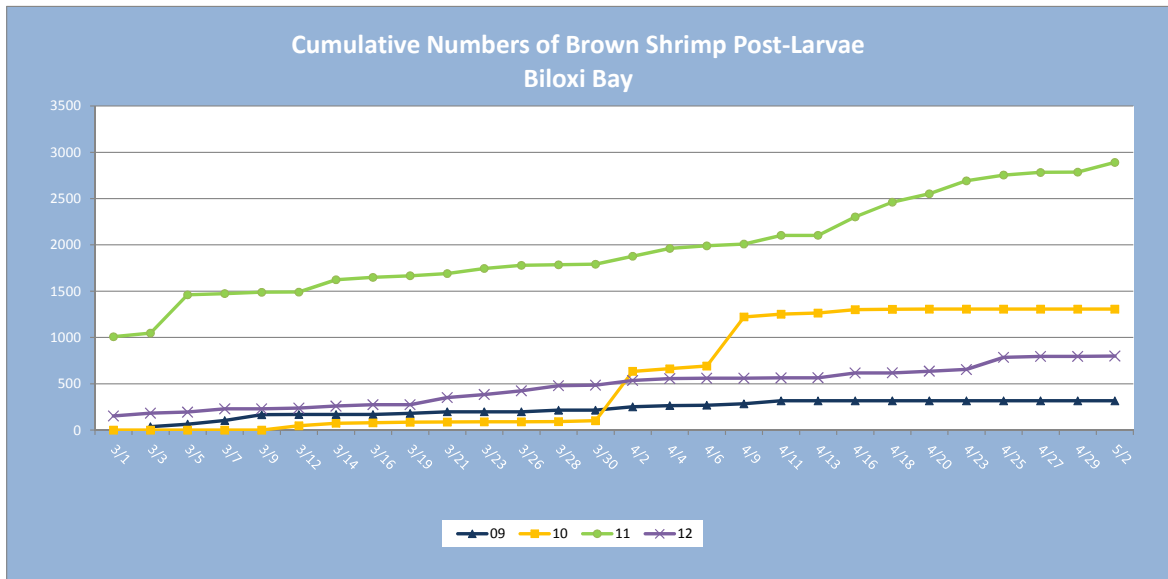
Net cash flow – the difference between cash inflow and cash outflow – averaged about \$6,000.

As the positive estimates for average net cash flow suggest, for most respondents, the average amount of money earned in cash revenues (cash inflow) was greater than the amount of cash expenditures (cash outflow). For many, however, the difference was relatively small. Furthermore, for a considerable portion of the respondents (over 45%), net cash flow was negative, meaning that cash expenditures exceeded revenues earned from commercial fishing.

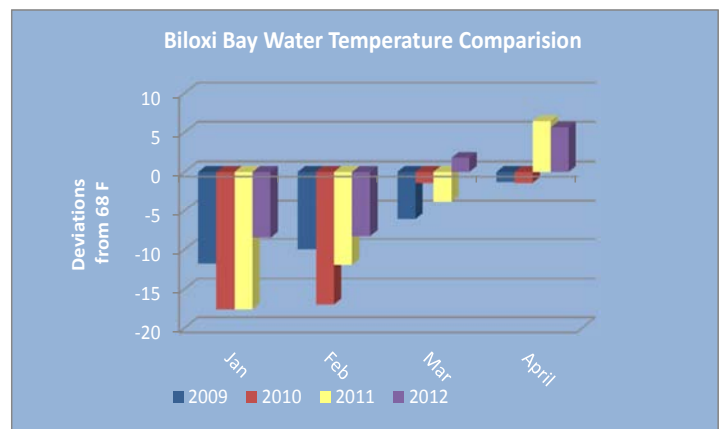
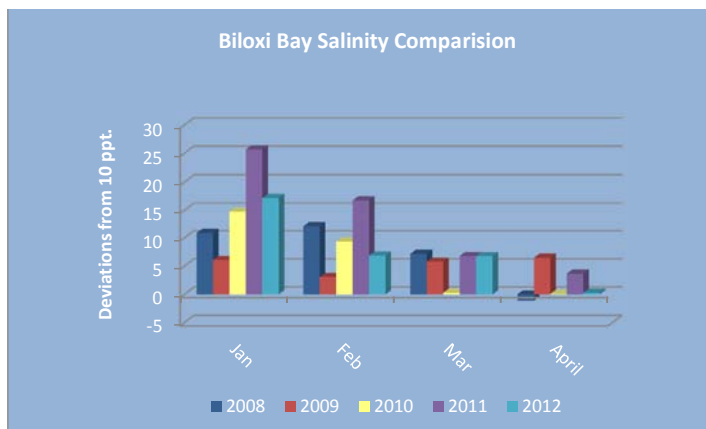
The survey results may be somewhat non-representative of a "typical year", since the study year (2008) saw two major hurricanes slam into Louisiana and Texas. Nevertheless, these results do suggest that most shrimpers in Gulf state waters operated on relatively thin cash margins. When these findings are combined with the results of similar surveys of commercial shrimpers in federal or offshore waters in the Gulf of Mexico, they illustrate the economic stress that the region's commercial shrimp fishery has recently experienced.

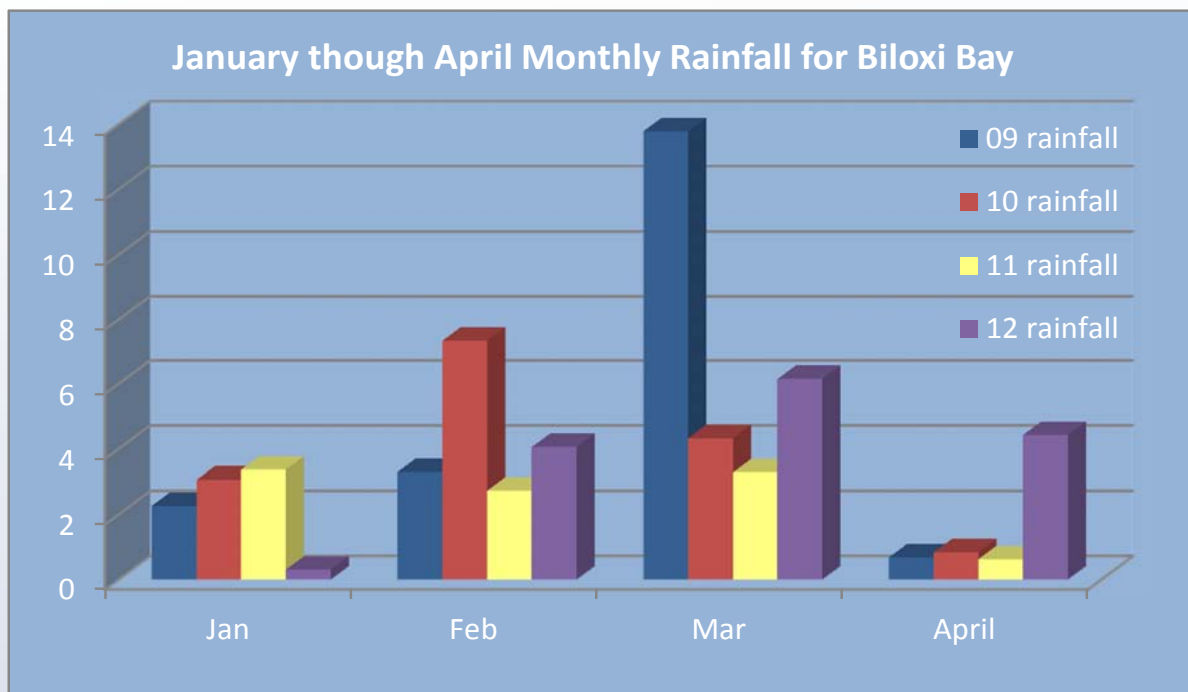
A final report of the results is located on GSMFC's Fisheries Economics Program webpage (<http://www.gsmfc.org/#:links@11:content@10>). A different and future report will present the combined economic performance and economic impacts (e.g. the number of jobs that the shrimp fleet contributes to the economy) for the total shrimp fishery in the Gulf (both inshore and offshore waters). Please feel free to contact Alex Miller, GSMFC Economics Program Coordinator, at (228) 875-5921 or amiller@gsmfc.org if you have any questions concerning this project.

Sampling Begins for the Annual Opening of Brown Shrimp Season



The DMR Shrimp and Crab Bureau along with the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory's (GCRL) Center for Fisheries Development have begun extensive sampling for brown shrimp in the Mississippi Sound. The sampling is necessary for DMR's fisheries scientists to determine the exact date for the opening of the 2012 shrimp season. GCRL pulls plankton nets in the Back Bay looking for brown shrimp post larvae, which is the stage of the shrimp's life cycle when it is extremely small (less than 25 mm or 0.98 inches), while DMR staff pulls trawls coastwide to find juvenile (26-40 mm or 1.02-1.57 inches) and adult brown shrimp (greater than 41 mm or 1.62 inches). In order for a shrimp to be of legal size (68 count), it must be approximately 100 mm (3.94 inches) long. The brown shrimp season's opening date can be determined when the majority of the shrimp are of that legal size. Environmental factors such as salinity, water temperature, rainfall and moon phase are also considered when setting the opening of the season. It has been found that the optimum growing conditions for brown shrimp occur when the salinities are above 10 parts per thousand and water temperatures are greater than 68 degrees Fahrenheit.





MarketMaker Offers Free Web Marketing to Fishermen

In June 2011, the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission started a marketing task force in each of the five Gulf States using MarketMaker. MarketMaker is a free, web-based marketing tool that links producers and consumers together to create larger markets for the producer and local food sources for the consumer. In 2006, MarketMaker was introduced to the Mississippi agricultural community, and has now been expanded to include not only the seafood industry, but agritourism and recreational activities as well.

The following business sectors are on MarketMaker:

1. Agritourism sector- Charter Boats for Hire
2. Eating and drinking places - seafood restaurants
3. Farmer
4. Farmers Market - local markets for seafood products
5. Fishery Sector - commercial fishermen
6. Food Retailer - seafood retailers
7. Processor - seafood processors
8. Wholesaler - seafood dealers and transport
9. Wineries

MarketMaker can be used as a free marketing tool to have an online presence, which is especially important in these times as technology has become part of everyday life. The business profile, which a business creates on MarketMaker, allows consumers to search for products they want along with where they can find that particular business. The business profile also allows the business to update what products they have, their operating hours, methods of payments they accept, contact information and any other information they would like consumers and buyers to know. Also, having an online presence creates a competitive advantage over those who do not have an online presence.

The Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center MarketMaker team in Biloxi, MS has held several workshops to introduce MarketMaker to local seafood businesses. Workshops can be requested for the future, and you can contact one of the team members below to get registered on MarketMaker: Benedict Posadas, benp@ext.msstate.edu, 228-546-1024; Amanda Seymour, aseymour@ext.msstate.edu, 228-546-1044; or Randy Coker, rcoker@ra.msstate.edu, 228-762-7783.

Capital Construction Fund for Fishermen

The purpose of the Capital Construction Fund (CCF) Program is to improve the fishing fleet by allowing fishermen to increase their growth of funds to replace or improve their fishing vessels. Created by the Merchant Marine Act of 1936, as amended (46 U.S.C. 1177), the CCF Program enables fishermen to construct, reconstruct, or under limited circumstances, acquire fishing vessels with before-tax, rather than after-tax dollars. The program allows fishermen to defer tax on income from the operation of their fishing vessels. Under the CCF Program, the amount accumulated by deferring tax on fishing income, when used to help pay for a vessel project, is, in effect, an interest-free loan from the government.

Any U.S. citizen is eligible who owns or leases a U.S.-built fishing vessel of at least two net tons and has an acceptable plan for refurbishing that vessel or building or acquiring an additional fishing vessel of at least two net tons. The term “fishing vessel” includes vessels used commercially in the fisheries of the U.S. for catching, transporting, and processing fish. Applications are accepted at any time. However, to be applicable to any given tax year, a CCF agreement must be executed and entered on or before the due date (with extensions) for filing your federal tax return for that tax year.

If you are a U.S. citizen and you own or lease one or more eligible vessels, you can open a CCF account. However, before you open your CCF account, you must enter into an agreement with the Secretary of Commerce through the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

The CCF agreement will establish which of your existing fishing vessels will be eligible for deferral of taxable income. These are called “Schedule A” vessels. Also what kind of qualified vessel (catching, processing or transporting/tendering fishing vessel) you will construct, reconstruct or acquire with the money in your CCF account is called “Schedule B” vessels. “Schedule B” refers to planned work or acquisition and is where you will keep the tax-deferred income you will use to pay for your Schedule B objectives. The place where you will keep this money is called the “CCF depository”, and the account is referred to as the “CCF account.” You decide what portion of your taxable income from your Schedule A vessels you want to deposit into your CCF account for the tax year. You then deposit that income into your CCF account in your designated CCF depository on or before your tax due date. Thus, you have put this deferred taxable fishing income into your own account in your own depository and will have it available to help pay for your Schedule B objectives.

An Investment Guide showing allowable investments of your CCF money is provided with the application kit. Open an account at the approved CCF depository in your own name (as shown on your approved CCF Agreement) and request that it be labeled “for CCF.” The account must be separate from general operating, personal savings or checking accounts, and used only for approved CCF activity. You may, of course, designate more than one depository in your CCF Agreement. After entering the agreement, additional depositories must be approved by NMFS.

You may get additional information or request an application kit at:

NOAA/NMFS, Financial Services Division, F/MB5
Capital Construction Fund Program
1315 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282
Telephone: (301)427-8728 FAX: (301)713-1939
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/mb/financial_services/ccf.htm

Federal Shrimp Regulation Updates May Benefit South Mississippi



Two new proposed changes to federal shrimp regulations may benefit South Mississippi fisheries. In January and February, NOAA Fisheries Service accepted public comment on a pair of actions that would: a. certify two new bycatch reduction devices (BRDs), and b. relax restrictions regarding the level of allowable shrimp effort.

Up for comment were two new BRDs that represent changes to the existing Composite Panel BRD, which is provisionally certified through May 2012. Technical specifications for these new BRDs as well as the means for legal enforcement of these new rules are included in the NOAA proposal.

These two new versions of BRDs call for the addition of a Composite Panel BRD, consisting of a square mesh panel, and the addition of a Cone Deflector Composite Panel BRD, made up of a “spooker” cone in the cod-end of the trawl behind the BRD. These two new BRDs are proposed additions to the list of allowable BRDs, which have been required in shrimp trawls in the eastern Gulf of Mexico since 2004. Shrimpers will have until May 2012 to modify their BRDs to meet these new specifications. A proposed relaxation of the allowable shrimp effort reduction threshold in the Gulf of Mexico is also being considered. Since 2008, existing regulations have required that shrimp effort in the 10-30 fathom depth zone be curtailed by 74 percent in reference to 2001-2003 levels.

The new proposed rule would adjust the shrimp effort reduction threshold to require a 67 percent reduction in effort in the 10-30 fathom depth zone in reference to the designated baseline years. The intended effect of this new regulation is to improve bycatch reduction the shrimp fishery, provide greater flexibility to the industry, reduce the social and economic impact to fishing communities, and better meet the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

For information contact Steve.Branstetter@noaa.gov or 727-824-5305.



National Transportation Safety Board Calls for Commercial Fishing Safety Improvements

National Transportation Safety Board Calls for Commercial Fishing Safety Improvements The Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery is the most hazardous fishery in the U.S. based on overall number of fatalities, 55 from 2000-2009.



The Coast Guard reported in 2008 that vessels smaller than 79 feet long are lost at a higher rate than larger vessels and that the majority of vessel losses are due to flooding, sinking and capsizing. Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recommends that the Coast Guard establish standards for new and existing commercial fishing industry vessels of 79 feet or less in length.

The NTSB issued five safety recommendations to the U.S. Coast Guard, regarding tougher standards for commercial fishing vessels.

- Establish standards for new and existing commercial fishing industry vessels of 79 feet or less in length that address intact stability, subdivision, and watertight integrity and include periodic reassessment of the vessels' stability and watertight integrity.
- Require all owners, masters and chief engineers of commercial fishing industry vessels to receive training and demonstrate competency in vessel stability, watertight integrity, subdivision and use of vessel stability information regardless of plans for implementing the other training provisions of the 2010 Coast Guard Authorization Act.
- Require each person on the deck of a commercial fishing industry vessel to wear a flotation aid at all times.
- Require owners of commercial fishing industry vessels to install fall overboard recovery devices appropriate for the vessel, periodically ensure the functionality of such equipment and regularly conduct drills.
- Require all crew members to provide certification of completion of safety training before getting under way on commercial fishing industry vessels, such training to include both prevention of and proper response to emergency situations.

Some other possible changes listed in the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 include:

- A new performance standard for lifeboats/survival craft that ensures that no individual is immersed in water.
- Fishing vessels built on or before July 1, 2012, that undergo a substantial change to the dimensions of or type of vessel must comply with an alternate load line compliance program developed in cooperation with the industry.
- Vessels must maintain a “safety logbook”, which is a record of equipment maintenance and required instruction and drills.
- A dockside safety examination at least once every two years.

The safety training requirements that are in effect right now are the same as they have been since September 1, 1994.

- Documented fishing vessel beyond the boundary line (or 12 miles from the coast in Gulf of Mexico) must conduct emergency drills (true since 1991)
- The person conducting the drills does not have to be the captain or member of the crew
- The person conducting the drills must have been trained in a USCG accepted Drill Conductor course
- There is currently no refresher training requirement for Drill Conductors.

In short, there is no date for the new training requirements to take effect nor is it clear what this training will exactly consist of yet. It is presumed that the new training requirements will not become regulations for awhile, certainly not this year.

The full list of federal safety recommendations can be found at:
www.nts.gov/doclib/recletters/2011/M-11-023-027.pdf.

Shrimpers Receive TED Instructional Video and Angle Meters

In 2010 and 2011 a large number of sea turtle strandings occurred in the northern Gulf of Mexico and many of these turtles were found in Mississippi. The Shrimp and Crab Bureau continues on-going proactive measures to decrease fishery and sea turtle interaction including the January 2012 distribution of NOAA turtle excluder device (TED) instructional videos to all licensed resident commercial shrimp fishermen. This video, which MDMR had translated into Vietnamese, reproduced and distributed, shows the proper installation and use of TEDs in the northern Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery. Mississippi shrimp fishermen have also recently received free angle meters as part of the Shrimp and Crab Bureau’s many efforts to address sea turtle strandings with fishermen in Mississippi waters. These angle meters help to insure compliance with NOAA regulations.



Seafood Safety Update

The DMR along with the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality continue to sample seafood from Mississippi waters each month in response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster. The safety of commercial seafood is determined by comparing tissue contaminant concentrations to FDA levels of concern. Toxicologists from federal and state agencies established criteria for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) in fish and shellfish using standard FDA and EPA risk assessment methods, which are protective of human health and applied consistently in each of the states and in federal waters.

For each of the four fishery categories—shrimp, crab, finfish and oysters —0.5 pounds of edible tissue is needed for testing. The number of specimens needed to extract the required amount of tissue varies by species: 10 to 12 blue crabs, 1 pound whole shrimp, etc. Finfish species used for this type sampling include, but are not limited to, menhaden, mullet, cobia, croaker, white trout, spotted sea trout and red drum. Tissue samples are analyzed at the Mississippi State Chemical Laboratory located at Mississippi State University. All 492 Mississippi response samples collected from May 28, 2010, to April 25, 2012, have been significantly below levels of concern. All target PAH Compounds detected were trace amounts, well below levels of concern. The results for each of Mississippi's four major fisheries are updated regularly at www.dmr.ms.gov.

2012 Marine Mammal Authorization Certificate

The shrimp fishery has been reclassified from a Category III to a Category II fishery under the Marine Mammal Protection Act by NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service. This means all commercial shrimp vessels must be registered and have an authorization certificate onboard. Commercial shrimpers with valid federal permits are automatically registered for the program. Commercial fishermen who believe they should be registered but have not been, or who want to verify they are registered in the NMFS Southeast Region should contact the NMFS SERO MMAP Hotline at 727-209-5952. For convenience, a copy of the certificate follows this article. More information can be found through this link: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/mm/mmap.htm>.

NOAA's NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS) 2012 MARINE MAMMAL AUTHORIZATION CERTIFICATE

Authorization:

Pursuant to Section 118 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) (16 U.S.C. 1387), the implementing regulations at 50 CFR Part 229, and subject to the terms and conditions below, NMFS issues this Authorization Certificate, which, when presented in combination with a current and valid federal fishing permit, authorizes the taking of non-endangered marine mammals incidental to commercial fishing in Category I or II fisheries.

Terms and Conditions:

- **All incidental mortality or injury of marine mammals occurring in the course of commercial fishing operations must be reported to NMFS within 48 hours after the end of each fishing trip in which the incidental mortality or injury occurred.**
- This Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, must be on board the vessel during commercial fishing operations.
- Authorization Certificate holders must comply with any applicable take reduction plans and emergency regulations.
- If requested to do so by NMFS or a designated contractor providing observer services to NMFS, an Authorization Certificate holder must take aboard an observer to accompany the vessel on fishing trips.
- When necessary to deter a marine mammal from damaging fishing gear, catch, other private property, or from endangering personal safety, the vessel owner, operator, or crew members may use measures which do not result in serious injury or mortality of the animal, as required by the deterrence provisions of the MMPA.
- A marine mammal may not be intentionally killed in the course of commercial fishing operations except where imminently necessary in self-defense or to protect the life of a person in immediate danger. Such lethal taking must be reported to NMFS within 48 hours. Any marine mammal incidentally taken must be immediately returned to the sea unless NMFS directs otherwise.
- This Authorization Certificate, or copy, must be made available upon request to any state or federal enforcement agent authorized to enforce the MMPA, any designated agent of NMFS, or any contractor providing observer services to NMFS.
- This certificate is not transferable. In the event of a change in vessel ownership, the Authorization Certificate is void and a new Authorization Certificate must be obtained by the new owner.
- If the registered vessel is sold or destroyed or is replaced by a new designated vessel, an authorization must be obtained for the new vessel.
- Any person who violates these Terms and Conditions, regulations under 50 CFR Part 229, or any provisions of Section 118 of the MMPA shall be subject to the penalties set forth in the MMPA.
- If there are changes in your mailing address or vessel ownership, notify the NMFS Southeast Region Protected Resources Division at 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL, 33701, (727) 209-5952, within 30 days.
- This certificate is valid from January 1, 2012 through December 31, 2012.



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

Michael Barnette, Michael.Barnette@noaa.gov
(727) 551-5794, FAX (727) 824-5309

May 8, 2012
FB12-031

NOAA Seeks Public Comment for Proposed Rule to Require Turtle Excluder Device Use for Skimmer Trawls, Pusher-Head Trawls, and Wing Nets (Butterfly Trawls)

NOAA Fisheries Service is seeking comments on a proposed rule to strengthen sea turtle conservation efforts. The rule, if implemented, would require all skimmer trawls, pusher-head trawls, and wing nets (butterfly trawls) to use turtle excluder devices in their nets. The purpose of the proposed rule is to aid in the protection and recovery of listed sea turtle populations by reducing incidental bycatch and mortality of sea turtles in the southeastern U.S. shrimp fisheries.

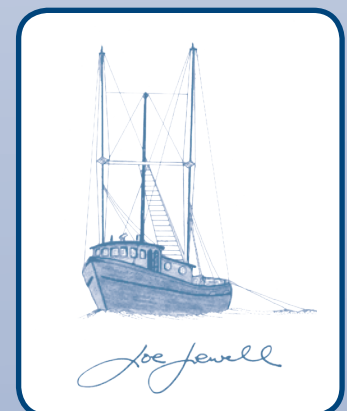
NOAA Fisheries Service also prepared a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS), which includes a description of the purpose and need for evaluating the proposed action and other potential management alternatives, the scientific methodology and data used in the analyses, background information on the physical, biological, human, and administrative environments, and a description of the effects of the proposed action and other potential management alternatives on the aforementioned environments.

For more information on the proposed rule and the documents outlining the analysis, a list of frequently asked questions regarding the newly proposed requirements in the southeastern shrimp fisheries can be found on the NOAA Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office's website at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pr.htm>.

Request for Comments

The proposed rule will publish in the Federal Register on May 10, 2012. A notice of availability on the DEIS will be published in the Federal Register on May 18, 2012. Written comments on the proposed rule and DEIS must be received no later than July 9 and July 2, 2012, respectively, to be considered by NOAA Fisheries Service. All comments received by NOAA Fisheries Service will be addressed in the final rule and final environmental impact statement.

Electronic copies of the proposed rule or the DEIS may be obtained from the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov> and the NOAA Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office's website at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pr.htm>.



Public Hearings

NOAA Fisheries Service has scheduled five public hearings in May and June 2012 to solicit public comment on the proposed rule. The dates, times, and locations of the hearings are as follows:

1. Morehead City, NC – May 30, 2012, 2pm-4pm, Crystal Coast Civic Center, 3505 Arendell Street, Morehead City, NC 28557.
2. Larose, LA – June 4, 2012, 4pm-6pm, Larose Regional Park and Civic Center, 307 East 5th Street, Larose, LA 70373.
3. Belle Chasse, LA – June 5, 2012, 4pm-6pm, Belle Chasse Community Center, 8398 Highway 23, Belle Chasse, LA 70037.
4. D'Iberville, MS – June 6, 2012, 4pm-6pm, L.H. "Red" Barnett Senior Center, 10450 Lamey Bridge Road, D'Iberville, MS 39540.
5. Bayou La Batre, AL – June 13, 2012, 2pm-4pm, Bayou La Batre Community Center, 12745 Padgett Switch Road, Bayou La Batre, AL 36509.

How to Submit Comments

You may submit comments by either of the following methods. Comments received through other means may not be considered.

Electronic Submissions: Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>

Enter the following docket number into the "Search" box: NOAA-NMFS-2012-0095.

Select the appropriate title, and click "Submit a Comment." This will display the comment webform.

Attachments to electronic comments (up to 10 MB) will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

Mail: Michael C. Barnette, NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, Protected Resources Division, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701-5505.

As a result of the 2011 Bonnet Carre' Spillway opening, a request has been submitted to the Department of Commerce, asking that a Fisheries Failure be declared for Mississippi's inshore shrimp fishery along with the blue crab and oyster fisheries.

Please Report Asian Tiger Shrimp Sightings

The Mississippi Department of Resources is asking fishermen and seafood processors to be on the lookout for exotic Asian tiger shrimp (*Penaeus monodon*). This species, native to South East Asia, Australia and the Philippines has been found recently in Mississippi waters and could pose a threat to native shrimp species. Commercial shrimp fishermen reported landing 15 Asian tiger shrimp from Mississippi waters in 2011. Tiger shrimp were captured in the Mississippi Sound near Pascagoula, Bellfountaine Point, Round Island, east of Cat Island, and south of Horn Island. The other two recorded Mississippi Sound sightings occurred near Pascagoula in 2009. Since 2006, tiger shrimp have also been found in the waters of Louisiana, Alabama, Florida and the Carolinas.

These exotic shrimp are presumed to have escaped from aquaculture facilities in the Caribbean and carried here by ocean currents. Although no tiger shrimp are currently being raised commercially in the United States, past aquaculture facilities have operated in Texas, Alabama, Florida and South Carolina. Potential environmental threats from exotic shrimp introductions include diseases and aggression affecting native shrimp including competition for food and habitat.

Asian tiger shrimp can easily be identified by the distinctive black and white “tiger” striping pattern on the shell and their large size compared to native shrimp. These giant crustaceans can grow to more than 10 inches long and weigh more than half a pound. When cooked, the meat turns white and the stripes turn red.

The MDMR would like to know about any Asian tiger shrimp caught in Mississippi waters to help determine the intensity of this threat. Sightings can be reported via email or text message to report.invasive@dmr.ms.gov or by phone during business hours at (228) 374-5000.



Black and White Banding on Tail

Large Size - Can Grow to Over 10" in Length

**INVASIVE
ASIAN
TIGER
SHRIMP**

**Please Report All Sightings
With Location**

(228) 374-5000

REPORT.INVASIVE@DMR.MS.GOV

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources <http://www.dmr.ms.gov>

Aquatic Invasive Species Coordination, Assessment and Control Plan Implementation - Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
This conservation project was funded with qualified outer continental shelf oil and gas revenues by the Coastal Impact Assistance Program, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement, U.S. Department of the Interior through a grant award to the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources



The DMR Office of Marine Fisheries, Shrimp and Crab Bureau would like to hear from you.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions please let us know:

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

Shrimp and Crab Bureau
Att: Newsletter Comments
1141 Bayview Ave
Biloxi, MS 39530
(228) 374-5000



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**Heather Schmidt, Age 9
Our Lady of Fatima**